3: Wallace & Hoebel E-4, 5 (1933, 1945) 1952
NO6 Comanche NO6

755 wrapped with sinew and softened in water was pushed down the throat to clear it.[10]

752 Although buffalo medicine was worked to cure bloody wounds, especially gunshot wounds, mechanical tourniquets were used when necessary. Surgery was also relied upon. Slope tells of a battle casualty whose intestines protruded from a belly wound. A medicine man stopped the bleeding by putting his buffalo tail in his mouth and blowing on the wound. He then pressed the intestines back into place, and after burning the spines off a prickly pear cactus, split it. The open surfaces of the cactus were pressed against the flesh on both sides of the wound to compress it. It was then bound up and left to heal.

757 For patients with rheumatism or headaches some doctors dug a trench and heated it with a fire until the ground cracked. Raking out the fire, they laid a bed of sage, poured cold water on to steam it, and felt to see that it was not too hot. The patient lay down in the trench and was covered by a buffalo robe or blanket for a good baking.

For toothache they heated tree fungus and held it to the aching jaw. Cavities were treated by stuffing a dried mushroom of a certain variety in the hole. A laxative was made by boiling the cambium layer of the willow tree. Healing by means of herbs was practiced by men and women alike, whether professional doctors or not, just as was the case with whites in pioneer America. Almost every man and old woman had a bundle of medicines peculiarly his own, the secrets of which were known only to the owner. One such remedy used by a doctor was about as follows. With the liquid obtained from boiling certain herbs, he bathed the patient. With a paste derived from the liquid he also painted dog tracks on the patient and on a large dog.[11]

Some of the owners of medicines were supposed to have learned of the various medicinal plants by means of dreams or through some mythical hero who went out on the prairie with the individual and pointed out various plants for use in treating diseases. Fasting was a 752 common treatment for most ailments. The Comanches are credited with "being expert in curing gun-shot wounds, and in the treatment

[10] Informant: She Invites Her Relatives.
[11] Informant: Medicine Woman.

The Comanches

757 The vapor bath or sweat lodge was used extensively in medical treatment as in the cure of Breaks Something.

789 Beyond curing and lending their protective power to others, the Comanche medicine men served to make rain and as seers. The rain-making medicine of Big Bear called for the use of an outside tail feather of a black eagle. With his power it was necessary only to dip the feather into water and sprinkle towards the sun four times. "A cloud will soon appear and shortly it will rain." Big Bear overdid it once when living in a tipi northeast of Cache, Oklahoma. He made medicine for a rain with some wind in it. Came a cloud. It grew bigger. Then came rain and a big wind that blew his tipi down. "His wife got after him for not asking for a nice, soft rain."[16]

787 A seer might be called upon to learn the fate of overdue war parties. In one simple method the medicine man "dreamed" on it and gave the answer in the morning. The other method was a regular séance. Post Oak Jim's account of such a séance is as follows.

« « « A war party was gone for a long time; they wanted to find out about it.

The medicine man had them clean up a nice place on the ground for a special tipi west of the camp. He selected about seven special men to go in with him. The camp was ordered to remain quiet. He had a fire built, and they went in just before midnight. They smoked and told the medicine man what they wanted to know.

He told them to put out the fire and close the smoke vent from outside.

Then he put on his blanket and went out into the night. He made a call. From way off an answer came back. He called again; the answering call was closer. He called a third time; it was closer yet. On his fourth call the answer was near by.

Then he re-entered the tipi and sat down.

"Everyone remain quiet," he told them. "The ghost is coming. That was his call."

The ghost, in the form of a bird, lit on top of the tipi. They could hear it was heavy.

From inside the tipi, the medicine man talked to it. "What we

[16] Informant: Slope.

5: Carlson & Jones E, N-4, 5 (1933)1939
NO6 Comanche NO6

Plant remedies played a part in the Comanche treatment of venereal diseases. The root of the thistle (*Cirsium undulatum*) was boiled and the liquid drunk in cases of gonorrhea. Another medicinal drink for gonorrhea was prepared by making an infusion of the stems of an unidentified plant (Comanche: *mawitsɔkᵛ*). Syphilitic sores were treated with the ashes of the stems of little bluestem grass (*Andropogon scoparius*).

Two plants were used by the Comanche, in much the same manner, for both toothache and sore throat. For toothache the root of the purple coneflower (*Echinacea sp.*) or the bark of the root of the prickly ash (*Zanthoxylum americanum*) was held against the tooth to relieve pain. In cases of sore throat the root of the coneflower was boiled in water and the liquid drunk, or the inner bark of the prickly ash was ground and placed in the throat. This similarity may indicate some association of tooth and throat troubles in the minds of the Comanche, but it very likely has no significance, since both plants were general cure-alls among various tribes. The Cheyenne utilized Echinacea for the same purposes, and the methods of application were only slightly different (9, p. 188). Echinacea was an important medicinal plant among the tribes of the Missouri River region, where its use for toothache was identical with that of the Comanche, but no mention is made of it as a cure for sore throat (7, p. 131).

Three plants were prescribed for the treatment of "sore eyes." The root of the Osage orange (*Maclura pomifera*) was boiled in water and the decoction used to bathe them; the stems of willow (*Salix sp.*) were burned and the eyes treated with the ashes; and the sap of the prickly poppy (*Argemone intermedia*) was administered to the eyes. It was said that in gathering this latter plant offerings in the form of beads or other objects were made to it.

A tea for "stomach trouble" was prepared from the roots of *Eriogonum longifolium*, and the leaves of mesquite (*Prosopis glandulosa*) were chewed, and the juice swallowed, to relieve acid stomach. A remedy for constipation was a drink made by boiling the stems of an unidentified plant (Comanche: *mawitsɔkᵛ*).

The bark of the prickly ash (*Zanthoxylum americanum*) was mixed with water and the decoction drunk as a cure for fever. Two other plants were also specified for the treatment of fever. The leaves of one of these (Comanche: *poiya*) were mixed with an herb (unknown

5: Carlson & Jones E, N-4, 5 (1933)1939
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824 278 ●757 to the informant) and boiled, the brew being used both externally and internally. The stems of a sneezeweed (*Helenium autumnale*) were soaked in water, and the body was bathed with this liquid. As a cure for colds the bark of the sumac (*Rhus trilobata*) was chewed and the juice swallowed.

A few miscellaneous remedies remain to be described.[4] The leaves of snakeweed (*Gutierrezia sarothrae*) were mixed with some other substance (unknown to the informant) as a remedy for whooping cough, and the roots of the nightshade (*Solanum sp.*) were boiled and the decoction prescribed as a general tonic, particularly in cases of tuberculosis. An infusion for reducing swellings was made from the red false mallow (*Malvastrum coccineum*) steeped in water. The tribes of the Missouri River region employed this plant in a similar manner (7, p. 103). Their practice was to chew the roots and apply [752] them to inflamed sores and wounds as a cooling and healing salve. The mucilaginous properties of the plant probably account for its use in this way. The roots of the dotted button snakeroot (*Liatris punctata*) were chewed and the juice swallowed as a cure for swollen testes. The leaves of the pecan (*Carya illinoensis*) or of the walnut (*Juglans nigra*), ground and rubbed on the affected part, were thought efficacious for ringworm.

824 411 439 The Comanche used the branches of the Osage orange (*Maclura pomifera*) in the manufacture of bows. This was the preferred wood for the making of bows throughout most of the Plains region. Since the Osage orange occurs in only a limited area, from southern Missouri to northern Texas, its wood became a valuable trade article. There are accounts telling of the great demand for it among tribes as far north as the Arikara and the Blackfoot and as far west as the Pueblos. John D. Hunter, who spent many years as a captive among the Indians of the Arkansas and Missouri country, says of the Osage orange (11, p. 173):

[825 752] [4] Two nonvegetal Comanche medicines were also collected. Although these are not pertinent to a discussion of plant uses, they may be recorded briefly. One is the nest of some nondomestic bee (Comanche: *tipinatsu*), composed of a gummy substance which gives off a pungent odor when heated. The nest was placed on the fire; its fumes, inhaled by one who was unconscious, were said to revive the person quickly. The other medicine is a white chalky mineral, apparently fossil bones (Comanche: *tsoβit'sitsuni*), which was obtained from deposits and used in treating sprains and fractures. The Comanche considered [776] this mineral to be the bones of Piamupits, a supernatural being.

5: Carlson & Jones E, N-4, 5 (1933)1939
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824 were not known by the particular informants questioned. One man felt that the white sage had a practical value, but did not know what it might be. Some of these plants have been recorded as used by tribes more or less in contact with the Comanche and may have been employed in a similar manner by the Comanche. The informant who pointed out the western ragweed (*Ambrosia psilostachya*) gave its name as *woanatsu*, but knew of no use for it. The ending *natsu* ● [757] indicates a medicinal plant, and it is interesting to note that this plant was prescribed by the Cheyenne in the treatment of colds, cramps in bowels, and bloody stools (9, p. 188), and that it was also valued by the Gosiute in the treatment of sore eyes (6, p. 49), but has a quite different name, without the *natsu* ending, in Gosiute.

221 166 824 The Comanche were formerly a very nomadic people, particularly after their acquisition of the horse. Marcy and McClellan (15, pp. 94–95) describe them as following the buffalo from place to place and also tell of their horse- and cattle-stealing expeditions, which covered over a thousand miles and even took them into the northern provinces of Mexico, consuming two years or more at a time. Richardson (19) tells something of the migrations, movements, expeditions, and contacts of the Comanche. They appear to have been in at least occasional touch with Apache and Pueblo Indians of the Southwest and with Plains and Plateau tribes as far north as what is now the Canadian border. It seems reasonable that they should have been an important agency in the diffusion of plants and of knowledge of plant uses as well as of other culture traits. They controlled practically all the limited area in which the valuable *bois d'arc* or bowwood grew and from which it was traded to the Siouan, the Caddoan, and other tribes to the north, and to the Pueblos to the west. They doubtless also were instrumental in spreading the narcotic cults based on the peyote and mescal beans. La Barre (12, p. 43) considers the Kiowa and the Comanche to be the center of diffusion of peyote in the Plains. Both peyote and mescal beans were native to the southwestern region of Texas and in Mexico, but were diffused almost throughout the Plains and as far northeastward as the Great Lakes. Certainly the many similar plant uses of the Comanche and of other tribes of the Plains, the Plateau, and the Southwest indicate either Comanche contact with these various peoples or a very active dissemination of such traits throughout these areas.

7: Richardson D-4 (no date) 1929
NO6 Comanche NO6

each side. To the center was attached his buffalo hair plait, 291
studded, at intervals of an inch or two, with enormous silver 177
medallions, of an oval shape, and at least four inches in largest diameter. This plait swept the ground, and he seemed to set great store by it, as nothing would induce him to part with one of the ornaments. A rifle and bow, quiver and arrows, completed his costume and equipments; but being slender in figure and short in stature, his appearance was not at all imposing.

In contrast to Naroni other Indians are described: 291
"Straightfellow was very miserably clad, dirty and ragged, with a very forbidding countenance, indicative of cunning and cruelty." While the women impressed the writer as being "Ugly, crooked-legged, stoop-shouldered, squalid and dirty, with haggard and prematurely old countenances, their hair cropped close to their heads, and with scarce a rag to cover their nakedness.[11]

The wonderful physical stamina of the American Indian has often 147
been commented upon by enthusiastic writers who have been wont to contrast their rugged physiques and powers of endurance with corresponding qualities in the softer and more effete civilized people. Doubtless nature, manifesting herself in the harsh environment of the plains country, mercilessly worked towards the elimination of weaker individuals so that those who survived to the age of maturity were generally sound. However that may be, it is certain that the Comanches had lost this physical superiority (if, indeed, they ever had it) by the time they had completed their southward migration. The fecundity of the women was low for a savage [842]
people, death of the mother at child-birth was not uncommon, and 164
rheumatism caused much suffering. Diseases brought by white intruders, such as Cholera, Smallpox and syphilis swept away many of the savages.[12] For smallpox they had no remedy other than [757]
the sweat bath followed by the cold plunge.

11. W. B. Parker, **Notes Taken during the Expedition Commanded by Captain R. B. Marcy, U. S. A., through Unexplored Texas, in the summer and Fall of 1854** (Philadelphia, 1856), 194.

12. The archives of the Indian office of the Republic of Texas, at Austin and of the United States Indian Office at Washington contain references to these diseases too numerous to cite. Also, the Bexar Archives and the Archive General, at the University of Texas and Mexico City respectively, indicate that during the Spanish period smallpox frequently ravaged the Comanche bands. For more general statements see, The Report of Alex B. Hasson, as cited and James Mooney, **Calendar History of the Kiowa Indians, Seventeenth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology**, I, 173, 289, 168, 172, 176, 274, 311, 177.

the patient and spirt the water from their mouths in his face, and affectionately enquire if he is better. Should the poor creature answer in the affirmative, (which is not often the case, as might well be supposed,) they attest their joy in the most ludicrous manner; but if the patient dies at this, or at a subsequent period of his illness, he is interred in the grave already dug at his door. The treatment is the same in the case of either sex, and they do not administer any kind of medicine. When a man is buried, they put his gun, powder and ball, bow and arrows, into the grave with him; and when a woman dies, they bury her as above stated, and then burn her tent and all she had; after which, they join together and build the family a new one. When a young child dies, they bury it lashed to the board on which they carry it.

But no pen can describe the extent of their wailings for the dead. When they return after a long absence, they alight from their beasts, and their women immediately turn them out, and then come and sit down at a respectful distance. Not a word of any kind is spoken by any one; the whole company is seated with the utmost silence. At length, without uttering a word, they begin to cry, and continue in this kind of exercise until it rises to a high pitch; when one of them suddenly stops, rises from his seat, and addresses the company, who at once give him their attention, while he tells them, in substance, that they have met together once more

20: Wallace H-4,5 (1945) 1953 NO6 Comanche NO6

657 make the cultural transition they have been called upon to
178 accomplish. As a result of its work, many tribal superstitutions
177 are being discarded for modern scientific concepts.
[757] Although hardly a Comanche would accept a white physi-
[756] cian at the beginning of the reservation period, the Indian practitioner today is almost a forgotten man.

186 The Comanches are still confronted with many sociolog-
178 ical and psychological problems of adjustment. They have
177 not entirely disintegrated, nor have they been completely
182 assimilated. They are still Indian and want to follow the Indian pattern; their environment, experience, and teaching encourages them to discard it. They are intensely proud of being Comanche, and cherish their cultural heritage. They feel that they were unjustly robbed of their homeland, but know that they must make the best of their situation. The conflict between the old and the new often prevents the acceptance of any regular pattern of conduct and leads to confusion or unusual situations.

[291] The matter of custom is vital to the Comanches. It is
[302] difficult to discard tradition. Some old women still wear their blankets, and a few old men continue to paint their
431 faces and to wear their hair in plaits. The tradition of gen-
[454] erosity does not fit well in American society for it is an impediment to economic security. Their idea of a pleasant life does not include saving, because saving had no place in their primitive society. The give-away dance has not entirely disappeared, and those who give are the losers and afterwards may seek the aid of the government.

157 There still exists a strong incentive toward the glorifica-
181 tion of the individual. This character trait was a regular
[178] feature of the old social system, where the aim of the warrior was to gain glory and where there was constant acknowledgment of his achievements. It led to an immense
[152] sensitiveness to praise and censure. The Comanches, as a result, require more praise than the white man to function,
157 and they suffer more than the white man from censure. The
181 attitude was readily apparent in 1945. More than two hun-
701

31: Jones E-5 (1967-1970) 1972 NO6 Comanche NO6
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listing the crow's aid against the owls or ghosts. Sanapia, however, does not share her Kiowa and Apache neighbor's aversion to owls. 778 237 775

You know, these Apaches sure are crazy. They get scared of them owls . . . they might hear them holler or something. It ain't nothing but a funny bird. A bird can't hurt nobody and they think it's a ghost. 171 [325]

Glass Slivers

Slivers of glass, usually obtained from broken beer bottles, are used by Sanapia whenever a certain treatment calls for the making of incisions in the flesh. This operation is almost always immediately succeeded by the use of the sucking horn or by suction applied by mouth. 756 755 757

Several examples will adequately explain the function of these slivers of brown glass. For both a severe headache and extreme vertigo the same procedure is followed. Minute cuts are made at either temple, in the middle of the forehead, and immediately below the hairline at the nape of the neck. These incisions are approximately one-sixteenth of an inch in length and penetrate only deep enough to produce a blood flow. The sucking horn is applied after all the cuts have been made, and sucking is continued from point to point around the head until both Sanapia and the patient are satisfied with the results.

Sanapia believes that "bad blood," or "foamy stuff," causing pressure in the head area is the cause of both conditions. To relieve the symptoms, the blood or foamy stuff, must be removed. The same notion of pain caused by the pressure of expanding foamy stuff stimulates the use of the cutting operation in the treatment of swollen joints, which Sanapia calls "rheumatism" in the absence of evidence indicating breaks or sprains. [753]

Sanapia specifies the use of only brown glass in an attempt to imitate her mother. The mother utilized what, from Sanapia's description, appear to have been brown flintlike slivers as cutting tools in doctoring. Sanapia does not know how to obtain "cutting rocks" so she employs brown glass as a close approximation.

Sucking Horn

Sanapia's sucking horn is a 4-inch section of the horn casing of a variety of domestic cattle found in her vicinity. The 4-inch section is cut from the point or extremity of the horn. This piece of horn is usually drilled and scoured to develop a clear opening from the tip of the segment of horn, which will be used as the mouthpiece, to the termination of the horn or area of widest diameter, which will be the point of application when the horn is employed in doctoring. [237]

This item is used when the treatment calls for Sanapia to attempt to suck sickness from the body of her patient. She recalls that when she was young, the sucking horn was used very little by the Comanche doctors which she had the opportunity to observe. If the treatment called for suction, the doctor employed his mouth. Sanapia believes that it was with the advent of the white man and his teaching that many diseases are spread and caught via the mouth that Comanche doctors began to depend more on the sucking horn in an effort to keep their mouth from contact with the patient. [177]

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fanning passes over the front and back of the body from the waist down. Sanapia prays that her patient may live a long, healthy life as she fans him and that all evil will be blown away from the patient by the motion of the feather. She explains that she has the power of the eagle; and when she touches a person with her Medicine feather, it is as if the eagle were touching them, instilling in them some of its Medicine. Her feather carries with it the tabus associated with her other medicine articles. However, a specific emphasis was placed by her mother on the prohibition of taking the Medicine feather into a room or area in which there is a large group of people.

> That eagle got some kind of power that I use for Medicine. I got one eagle feather, and it is really powerful, that thing. And I believe it. I done many works with that feather. I believe it.

Indian Lard

"Indian lard" is the name Sanapia applies to tallow or rendered beef fat. She uses it as a general purpose salve, though she states that it is especially efficacious in the treatment of severe burns. Also, it is her only remedy for constipation. Two or three tablespoonsful of lukewarm liquified tallow are administered to a patient with constipation.

Mouth Wash

The majority of cases which Sanapia treats involve the sucking operation. When the sucking is completed, Sanapia requires something to kill the "poison" and the disagreeable taste which is left in her mouth. Her mother used kerosene; however, Sanapia prefers a commercial brand of mouth wash and carries a small bottle of it in her medicine kit.

Red Paint

The red paint used by Sanapia is obtained by grinding and powdering a dark red clay which she finds west of Geary, Oklahoma. The paint is reconstituted by mixing it with water or tallow.

The paint is ever present in all of her blessing ceremonies. She also uses this paint at the termination of her treatment of ghost sickness. On the last day of treatment, she paints the patient's face, lower arms, and lower legs. The patient is instructed to wear the paint for two days before washing it off.

Sanapia states that painting is a prayer to the earth. The red paint is obtained from the earth and is the color of the earth. When she applies it to her patient she is asking the earth to care for him.

> The earth . . . talk to it like a mother. They call it that. Say "Watch this man, or woman, or child. They walking on you, same color as you, they you child. You can see that. Watch out for them during the long time they got to be on you."

31: Jones E-5 (1967-1970) 1972 N06 Comanche N06
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824

Botanical Medicines: Collection, Preparation, and Dosage

Sanapia collects her botanical medicines from their natural habitat in the late fall and early winter. She feels that by this late date the rattlesnakes, of which she has a morbid fear, will be less numerous. More importantly, she feels that plants are not completely matured until immediately before their death at the first frost of fall.

> I don't know how you could get any medicines in the spring. Just full grown is when they any good. That's when I get it. Rattlesnakes be gone too. In the fall they be already to get. Go get them when its cool, now its no good because it's summer. Too hot and too many snakes around. Plants aren't good now anyway for medicine.

The root is the most important source of medicine on any plant, according to Sanapia. She seldom utilizes other parts of a plant, but it is noteworthy that when she does, the part she uses is in almost every instance the top of the plant.

[778] Sanapia feels that the two most important sources of power for a medicine plant are the earth and the sun. She uses this rationale to explain her use of only the extreme top of plants, the part nearest the sun, and the extremity most surrounded by earth, the root. Peyote and cedar are notable exceptions to this scheme.

[778]

[755]
[757]

Bottom, left to right: medicine cedar, sucking horn, bakumak. *Top, left to right: peyote, glass slivers,* bekwinatsu.

31: Jones E-5 (1967-1970) 1972 NO6 Comanche NO6
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Sanapia refers to all other varieties of *Juniperus* as *tsiβowa:pi*, or "white man cedar." She uses the dried and pulverized root to make a decoction which is internally administered to treat menstrual complaints. However, to Sanapia, the dried and rubbed leaves of the cedar are the most important parts of the plant. She sprinkles them on live coals, which are always formed from pecan twigs, to produce a thick aromatic smoke which is inhaled by patients suffering from ghost sickness, vertigo, or severe headache. The cedar smoke is also fanned over an individual by Sanapia in her blessing ceremony, a prominent aspect of all her doctoring activities. She uses the cedar medicine smoke in any instance when she is called upon to dispel the influences of the ghosts. When she is commissioned to ritually cleanse a house in which a death has recently occurred, she employs cedar smoke as a central core in this activity. When an individual is plagued by thoughts of a deceased relative, Sanapia prescribes a fumigation of the home with cedar smoke. She also strongly urges "cedaring" of the sleeping area before retiring at night.

> Only use that red berry kind . . . get it on those slick hills west of here. They say when you use that cedar and they smell it, it blows all that bad stuff and pain away from you with that smoke. It keeps you well, and you won't ever be scared or nothing. Lot of different ways it help you like that. It's green, and its living all the time. In winter, summer, anytime. I don't care when. It's got Medicine for that. That's why I use it.

nasta"ksi

"sneezing medicine" *Helinium microcephalum* (sneezeweed)

This plant is collected in the early fall. The flowers are detached and allowed to dry. When dried, the flowers are crushed and inhaled through the nose to produce the desired violent sneezing.

Sneezing medicine is administered to patients suffering from heart "flutter," low blood pressure, and head and nasal congestion. In Sanapia's opinion, the sneezing stimulated by this medicine keeps the heart beating steadily and strongly, thus maintaining the proper blood pressure. Also, she has the notion that in old age the heart becomes loosened from the cavity in which it is supposed to be housed. The violent sneezing caused by this medicine is capable of shocking the heart back into its proper position.

For those suffering from sinus congestion or head colds, Sanapia makes a very effective "inhaler" out of a small bottle or can. The container is half filled with the sneezing medicine. The patient is directed to shake the container, remove the lid, and inhale the dust when he is suffering from head congestion. Sanapia got the idea for her inhaler from commercials for cold remedies which she has seen on television. Many of her ideas concerning the nature of head and chest congestion and especially colds stem from notions absorbed from viewing television commercials. She uses terms like "bronmicha" for "bronchial" and "simus" for "sinus." The bronmicha is everything in the chest cavity except the lungs and

31: Jones E-5 (1967-1970) 1972 NO6 Comanche NO6
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heart. Her idea of the location of the sinus cavities is essentially correct, though she does not understand their function.

ekɔpa

"red bean" *Sophora secundiflora* (mescal bean)

Sanapia grinds the mescal bean to the consistency of granulated sugar and then boils this coarse powder, which she first wraps in a makeshift cloth bag. When the decoction has reached the desired brownish coloration, it is strained through another piece of cloth, and the liquid is used as eardrops in the doctoring of earaches and sores deep in the ear. Sanapia reports that her maternal uncle, a *puhakut*, would sew mescal beans into the cuffs of his trousers as protection against possible contamination from menstrual blood.

puitsatene

"eye scraper" *Elymus sp.* (rye grass)

Sanapia uses a single looped blade of this grass as a filelike tool in the removing of "cataracts" (trichoma). She describes this treatment as follows:

> You take that and double it up and turn the eye lid over and scrape it just as easy as you can. Then you just scrape it and scrape it until it bleeds . . . that thing on there bleeds. Well, you just keep on scraping until it finally comes off. Its the eye lid that causes cataracts because those things rub on the eye and make them sores. You got to scrape the eye. Put sugar water on it after you scrap it. It makes it feel better. Put sugar on after that thing stops bleeding.

kunɔnatsu

"fire medicine" *Zanthoxylum americanum* (prickly ash)

An infusion is made from the root of this plant and used for the treatment of fever. The powdered root is also used in the treatment of toothache and burns. For toothaches, the powder is wrapped in a piece of cloth and this tiny bundle of medicine is placed next to the afflicted tooth. The medicine promotes a numbing in the mouth. In the treatment of burns, the powder is sprinkled dry on the burn. The term "fire medicine" stems from the burning sensation which this medicine causes when it contacts an open wound.

bakuma[k]

"in the water" *Iris sp.* (iris)

This plant is an unidentified variety of *Iris* which is not native to Sanapia's home area of Comanche County, Oklahoma. Sanapia utilizes a decoction of the root in the treatment of colds, upset stomache, and sore throat.

bakuma[k] is the only medicine plant whose locale of growth is to some extent controlled by Sanapia. Her mother transplanted a number of these plants

31: Jones E-5 (1967-1970) 1972 NO6 Comanche NO6
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to a spring near Sanapia's home, and Sanapia makes an effort in her collection of this plant to never totally deplete the planting made by her mother.

This *Iris* is very similar to a variety which is found in eastern Oklahoma, significantly in an area of high Creek Indian population density. The Comanches and the Creeks have had close ties since the late nineteenth century (Wallace and Hoebel 1952:304), and Sanapia remembers traveling with her mother to eastern Oklahoma to visit Creek acquaintances. It is possible that Sanapia's mother could have learned of the medicinal qualities of this plant from the Creeks and brought back a collection to her home in Comanche County. The peculiar characteristics of the variety of *Iris* which Sanapia uses as medicine could have resulted from natural modifications stimulated through time by this change in environment.

pɔbɔβi

"white sage" *Artemisia ludoviciana* (lobed cudweed; gray sage)

Sanapia employs the leaves of the gray sage in treatment of insect and spider bites. She chews the leaves and rubs the resulting moist pulp over the area of bites to relieve itching and swelling.

esipɔbɔβi

"sweet smelling sage" *Poliomentha incana* (sweet sage)

This medicine plant comes from the area of the Mescalero Apache reservation in southeastern New Mexico. It is obtained for Sanapia by Fort Sill Apaches who have ties with the Mescalero.

In a doctoring situation when Sanapia must apply her mouth to the afflicted area of the patient's body in an attempt to suck the sickness from the patient, she chews a small piece of sweet sage and retains it in her mouth with the masticated medicine which is being specifically employed at the time. She states that the sweet sage acts to sweeten the usually bitter taste which results from this type of procedure. Sweet sage, in certain circumstances, is also added to *bekwinatsu* (to be discussed) to increase its potency. It is also added to various medicinal "teas" to make them more palatable to the patients.

During Comanche peyote meetings held on Sanapia's property, it was pointed out that the leafy cushion upon which the Chief Peyote rested was made of sweet sage. The sweet sage used in the peyote meeting is particularly valued by Sanapia as a medicine since it gains an added potency through its contact with the Chief Peyote.

bekwinatsu

"swelling medicine" *Matelea biflora* or *cynanchoides* (recumbent milkweed)

This is one of Sanapia's major medicines and one of the three plants which she attributes with some degree of intrinsic supernatural potential. The other two medicines so considered are peyote and cedar.

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278 824 755 757 A decoction of the thick white root is externally administered in the treatment of ghost sickness, bruises, bone breaks, and menstrual cramps. A paste made from the root is used to coat the finger during the treatment of "poking the throat." This procedure is usually initiated in the case of children with diphtheria or other conditions which are acting to close the throat passage. Sanapia applies the paste to her index finger and lightly probes the child's throat to the extent of her finger's reach. This same paste is used as a liniment in all cases of severe stomach pains. In addition, Sanapia spews from her mouth a very dilute decoction of this medicine on patients suffering from ghost sickness.

There is more ritual activity involved with the collection of *bekwinatsu* [782] than with any other plant medicine which Sanapia utilizes. Upon approaching the area in which the plant will be collected, Sanapia recites a short prayer.

> Well, I tell it that I'm coming to take it way with me. I say that I need you help peoples that got twisted face . . . what them ghosts do to peoples, you know. Then I tell it that I'm going to give it something in return. I supposed to put a piece of green goods over its branche before I dig it out. Sometimes I do and sometimes I don't. Sometimes I'm in a hurry so I don't do that, but that's what I'm supposed to do, that's what my uncle told me to do.

When she approaches the plant, she situates herself to the west of the plant and drapes a small strip of dark green cloth over the spindly branches. She then digs the plant from the ground, detaches the long root, and deposits the remainder of the plant over the hole from which it was extracted with the strip of green cloth attached to one of the branches.

sanawiba

[137] "yellow flowers"; "makes knife sticky" *Guitierrezia dracunculoides* (broomweed)

Sanapia uses this plant medicine for the treatment of exzema and rashes when prepared as she describes.

> Get the tops . . . the flowers . . . and boil them into a jelly. Now, when anybody got excema, you just wrap it on . . . put it on a rag and wrap it on there. Use the tops . . . just tops. Boil them good and when they cool down, they get just like jelly. That jelly is what you use for medicine.

kusiwana

"it's gray" [No specimen]

This is one of Sanapia's major medicines. It is used as an addition to many medicinal preparations to increase their potency. An infusion made from the root is also used as a sedative in the absence of peyote or concomitantly with peyote. It is specifically used, however, in the treatment of "fits" (epilepsy?) and as the main medicine employed in the treatment of witch victims.

When used to treat fits, the splintered root is boiled to a tea, and the

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patient is liberally dosed with this decoction until the symptoms subside. According to Sanapia, this root is unusually hard and therefore difficult to prepare for use as a medicine. However, she considers its extreme hardness as a positive quality since she associates hardness with compactness; therefore, she feels there is more medicine to a piece of *kusiwɔna* than there would be to practically any other medicine of equal size.

In the treatment of victims of witchcraft, a decoction of this root is utilized in several different ways. It can be made into a thick paste which is applied to an area of minute incisions which are made by Sanapia with slivers of glass before she begins to suck from the victim the magically toxic feather which has been introduced into the victim's body by the witch. The decoction can also be drunk by the patient, or it can be spewed on him by Sanapia in the course of treatment.

do:ltsa

[No translation] [No specimen]

Sanapia obtains this medicine from Shoshone friends who live on the Fort Washakie reservation in central Wyoming. She utilizes the thick root of this plant, without modification, as a medicine to induce appetite and stimulate weight gain. A decoction made from this root is also used in the treatment of tuberculosis.

From Sanapia's description of *do:ltsa* and its properties, it could be suggested that this plant is *Perideridia gairdneri*, a wild caraway, called *yap* by the Comanches (Kearney 1951:615). Since Sanapia first acquired this medicine from an Arapaho uncle, who in turn suggested to her certain Shoshone as further sources for it, the name which she uses may well be Arapaho, Shoshone, or Sanapia's Comanche-ized corruption of an Arapaho or Shoshone word which is applied to this plant.

bɔ:tasas

"looks like feathers" [No specimen]

This medicine, like sweet sage, is obtained for Sanapia by Fort Sill Apaches from the Mescalero country. The fruiting body is made into an infusion which is internally administered in the treatment of tuberculosis, various stomach complaints, and postnatal hemorrhaging. A thick paste is prepared from these fruiting bodies and applied as a liniment to the chest and throat of those suffering from pneumonia. No specimen would be obtained. However, from Sanapia's description, *Agoseris* might be suggested as a highly probably genus affiliation.

oinatsu

"vomit medicine" [No specimen]

Sanapia reports but one use for this medicine plant. A decoction of the root is taken internally by patients afflicted with asthma or chest congestion. The described results are quite spectacular.

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278 824 755 757 You just give them a cup full of this, and another cup, and another, and another . . . they just be filled up with that medicine. Sit around for ten or fifteen minutes and that medicine just goes in their stomach and stirs up all that fluid, whatever it is. When you got asthma, you got all those bronmicha [sic] tubes filled with slobber. That medicine takes it out. It comes out by itself, you don't have to vomit or nothing . . . through the mouth . . . comes right out. Some of it comes through the nose too. It runs out fast and they get well. You don't have to treat them another day longer.

itse

[No translation] [No specimen]

This medicine comes from the Mescalero Apache region and is obtained from the same sources which supply Sanapia with *ba:tasas* and *esipohoβi*. Dr. Harry W. Basehart of the University of New Mexico, who has done field research among the Mescalero, states the word *itse* is very similar to a Mescalero word which means "mystical influence." Mrs. Julia A. Jordon made a similar suggestion based [177] on her experience with the Kiowa-Apache of Oklahoma. There is a strong possibility, then, that this word has been borrowed from Apache into Comanche.

The part of the plant which is utilized as medicine seems to be from [752] [825] Sanapia's description, a fruiting body. The plant is chiefly used as a remedy for the bites of rattlesnakes and as a rattlesnake repellent. Sanapia describes how she uses it as a snake repellent for her son:

> When he goes to the field, like now, I have it boiled and I just rub it on his leg like that and then a cloth and pour it on and tie it around his boots . . . pour it all on there. Now if there's a rattlesnake running right there, he right up on him, but he won't jump him. He smells that and he just lay low. It'll kill that snake right now. I don't know how it does it. That medicine is really strong. A rattlesnake ain't going to smell it. They going to die if they smell it.

Sanapia recalls that she saw old people among the Comanche carry it in small cloth sacks tied to their belts or around their ankles in order to repel snakes. [752] In the case of snake bite, the *itse* is chewed to a pulpy consistency and spread over the fang punctures, or it is retained in the mouth of the one who attempts to suck the poison from the wound. It is also used in this manner for the bites of poisonous spiders and scorpions.

In addition, Sanapia boils it into a thick broth for patients suffering from pneumonia. She notes that one of *itse*'s interesting characteristics is that it causes excessive salivation, and she therefore employs it when she must induce salivation in a patient.

osidobeda

[137] "peyote" *Lophophora williamsii* (peyote)

Peyote is Sanapia's most utilized general medicine, and in her opinion its curative properties can aid in healing any type of human physical affliction. She grinds and pounds the dried buttons to a powder which is then boiled or

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steeped to produce a decoction or infusion of the desired consistency and coloration, or she employs the powdered peyote buttons alone. She also makes a medicinal relish from the green peyote buttons. In many cases the peyote is left unaltered and used in its dried or green state. 278 824 755 757

As mentioned, Sanapia can involve peyote in the treatment of any type of illness. Peyote is used mainly by Sanapia as a painkiller and sedative. It can be prepared in numerous ways. To quiet pain, Sanapia gives the patient four peyote buttons to eat, in most cases by chewing them first. For colds, pneumonia, and internal disorders, a decoction or infusion of peyote, commonly called "peyote tea," is administered.

When treating ghost sickness, Sanapia manipulates peyote in several ways. The patient is given four buttons to act as a sedative. During treatment Sanapia puts some dilute peyote tea in her mouth, releases a portion of it into her hands, and applies this to the affected portions of the patient's face. While retaining some of the solution in her mouth, she applies her mouth to the patient's face. She may also spew this thin decoction over the patient if she believes this type of procedure would be efficacious.

She applies thin, latitudinal, coinlike slices of the peyote button in the treatment of arthritis, severe headaches, heart pains, and in any relatively localized area of pain. Of course, a liquid preparation of peyote can also be administered in these conditions. The exact manner of administration and preparation of all medicines is determined by Sanapia through experience and inspiration.

Sanapia carries several peyote buttons with her at all times. She considers this her minimal doctoring kit. Peyote is extremely important to Sanapia as a medicine. However, she feels that her powers make her superior to the peyote. She states that peyote is the most powerful of all plant medicines. It is also one of the few medicines which Sanapia talks to and the only one which she threatens.

tɔpinatsu

"rock medicine" 278 824

This medicine is not a botanical item. I include it under the section on botanical medicines for several reasons. Sanapia feels that rock medicine is totally composed of plant parts. Also, at times she speaks of it "growing on rocks." 237 755 757

Tɔpinatsu is the word which Sanapia applies to the gummy, amber-colored matrix produced by a variety of mason bee as the basic material for its egg depositories. This solitary bee affixes these irregularly shaped cases, which are usually between ½ and 1 inch in diameter and approximately one-fourth of an inch thick, to rocks and then proceeds to camouflage the case by inserting local grains of sand and pieces of gravel into the sticky matrix of the case. It is from the resulting rocklike appearance that the medicine gains its Comanche name. Sanapia describes its composition:

> Some little bitty bugs get gum from the cedars on them slick hills. Then they take bites from the yellow flowers on them broomweeds, and some sage

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278 824 237 755 757 [754] too. Put it in their bodies and mix it up so they can stick it on these rocks like you can see. That's why this medicine works best with cedar.

Rock medicine is only used in conjunction with cedar: Both are deposited on live coals to produce medicine smoke. The *tɔpinatsu* sputters when placed on the coals and produces a thick white smoke which is not unlike cedar smoke in odor, though more pungent. This medicine's major use is in the treatment of ghost sickness and the results of witchcraft.

Sanapia picks the tiny pebbles and grains of sand from the *tɔpinatsu* and forms the then-translucent amber-colored gum into a ball about an inch in diameter. She rolls the ball between her palms and the heat and friction polish it to a glassy brown-gold color. It is in this form that it is utilized as medicine.

There is a medicine similar in kind to *tɔpinatsu* which Sanapia reports is found in the vicinity of Wichita Falls, Texas. The Comanche word for it, according to Sanapia, means "rats make it." It is described as being of the same composition as *tɔpinatsu*; however, instead of being produced by "little bugs," it is believed to be produced by pack rats. The gummy substance is melted in hot water, and persons suffering from paralysis, other than the kind caused by ghosts, are bathed in this concoction. This medicine, unmelted, is also applied directly to the area of paralysis. Sanapia remembers that her mother used this medicine; however, it was not transferred to Sanapia when she became a doctor.

278 824 755 757 [844] [303] Another medicine plant of which Sanapia has knowledge, but which was not transmitted by her mother to her, is one which, when mixed *bekwinatsu*, was administered as a sedative to women in protracted labor. The seeds of this plant were utilized as medicine when boiled into a medicinal decoction. Sanapia also states that the seeds of this plant augment the attractive aroma of Indian perfume (*Monarda fistulosa*) when the two are mixed and moistened.

I can just sit here and look at them bald prairies and see four kinds of medicines growing. I bet you can't even see them? Not many . . . even of my people, up to today, can even see them growing early in the spring. I can because I've learned that way. There's lots of plants that can get you well, but they ain't many people who even know that anymore.